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Spolidoro Stars At Foot Locker Regionals



Sophomore Julie Spolidoro defeated Milton's Kate O'Neil, along with over 200 other runners, to win the Freshman/Sophomore race at the Foot Locker Northeast Regional Cross-Country Championships at Van Cortland Park in New York on Saturday.

The race was mired by a small controversy when Spolidoro surged at the finish to edge O'Neil and then

watched as the race was declared a tie.

"I wasn't able to be at the tape at the finish," said Duxbury Coach Ron Glennon. "But even O'Neil admitted she hadn't won."

This was one of several incredible battles these two runners have had all year and it took a spectacular effort on Spolidoro's part to win this event over the 3.1 mile course located in the Bronx.

"This is a really tough course," explained Glennon. "They start out around a big field that's pretty flat, so they all go out real hard from the start. They are all trying to get to the trail that leads through the woods because it is very difficult to move to the front of the pack once the trail narrows."

Spolidoro did an excellent job of moving to the front of the pack and was in 3rd place entering the woods.

"I knew as she disappeared she had a great chance at winning the race. She seemed to be running comfortably and when she emerged it was neck and neck," said the elated coach.

"Kate and I were chasing the leader in the woods," said Spolidoro. "She started to fall back and we both passed her. I thought Kate was going to lose me on the hills, but I kept coming back to her on the downhills."

The leaders continued to swap positions until Spolidoro pulled away in the final 400 yards for her apparent victory.

"I'm really surprised I did so well," said Spolidoro. "I was hoping to finish in the top 10 and I expected more competition because of the number of kids running. I really had no idea where I stood."

Freshman Lindsey Disch also turned in an admirable performance in the same race when she finished in 63rd place with the 21st best time for a freshman.

Sarah Robinson, Sheila McCarthy, Kerri Boyce, and GERALYN KRUGER also participated in the weekend event and according to Glennon gained some valuable experience.

"This was a great experience for all the kids. It was a real eye-opener in terms of gauging the competition from outside our area and gave the kids a chance to see how they measure up."

It was very difficult for junior Max Breitenicher to gauge his abilities against the competition because of a dreadful start which found him in dead last after falling.

The Championship race was one of the day's last events, so the starting area had become muddy and slippery due to the thawing of the previously frozen ground.

After recovering from his mishap, Breitenicher managed to turn on the jets and pass over 100 runners to finish in 114th place.

In the Junior Race, Derek McCarty turned in a nice effort to finish 35th in a field of over 250.

Other DHS runners who competed were Tim Coghlan, John Bennett, DJ Simonelli, Mark Cabana, Joe Petrucelli, and Mike McCarthy.

The trip to New York was not an MIAA event and funding was not provided by DHS, but donations of transportation and time by community supporters contributed to a successful weekend performance.